

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing an authentication service in a gaming network including  
5 gaming machines, the method comprising:  
publishing the availability of the authentication service on the gaming network;  
receiving a request to register with the authentication service from a service provider  
on the gaming network; and  
processing one or more service requests between the service provider and the  
10 authentication service, said service requests conforming to an internetworking protocol.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the authentication service comprises a web service.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the service request is formatted according to a service  
15 description language.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the service description language is a Web Services  
Description Language (WSDL).
- 20 5. The method of claim 2, wherein the authentication service is registered in a UDDI  
registry.
6. The method of claim 2, wherein the authentication service accesses an authentication  
database.  
25
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the authentication database is accessed using an  
LDAP protocol.
8. The method of claim 6, wherein the authentication database is accessed using a  
30 RADIUS protocol.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the authentication service is a local service in the gaming network.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the authentication service is provided at a well known  
5 location.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the well known location comprises a TCP/IP address and port.

10 12. The method of claim 10, wherein the well known location comprises a message queue.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the well known location comprises a file location for performing a file transfer operation.

15 14. The method of claim 9, wherein the authentication service is registered in a local environment for the service.

15. A gaming network system providing an authentication service, the gaming network system comprising:

a service provider communicably coupled to the gaming network;

at least one gaming machine communicably coupled to the gaming network and

5 operable to request a service from the service provider; and

an authentication server hosting an authentication service, said server communicably coupled to the gaming network and operable to:

publish the availability of the authentication service on the gaming network;

receive a request to register with the authentication service from a service

10 provider on the gaming network; and

process one or more service requests between the service provider and the authentication service, said service requests conforming to an internetworking protocol.

15 16. The gaming network system of claim 15, wherein the authentication service comprises a web service.

17. The gaming network system of claim 16, wherein the service request is formatted according to a service description language.

20

18. The gaming network system of claim 17, wherein the service description language is a Web Services Description Language (WSDL).

19. The gaming network system of claim 16, wherein the authentication service is  
25 registered in a UDDI registry.

20. The gaming network system of claim 16, further comprising an authentication database and wherein the authentication service accesses the authentication database.

21. The gaming network system of claim 20, wherein the authentication database is accessed using an LDAP protocol.

22. The gaming network system of claim 20, wherein the authentication database is  
5 accessed using a RADIUS protocol.

23. The gaming network system of claim 15, wherein the authentication service is a local service in the gaming network.

10 24. The gaming network system of claim 23, wherein the authentication service is provided at a well known location.

25. The gaming network system of claim 24, wherein the well known location comprises a TCP/IP address and port.

15

26. The gaming network system of claim 24, wherein the well known location comprises a message queue.

27. The gaming network system of claim 24, wherein the well known location comprises a  
20 file location for performing a file transfer operation.

28. The gaming network system of claim 23, wherein the authentication service is registered in a local environment for the service.

25